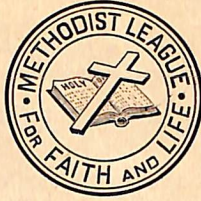


Apr 20. 1925

# THE CALL



## TO THE COLORS

*Organ of the* **METHODIST LEAGUE FOR FAITH AND LIFE**

Vol. I

PHILADELPHIA, PA., APRIL, 1925

No. 1

### The League and Its Origin

THE beginning of a new organization is always a significant item about the Church. The beginning of the Methodist League for Faith and Life is a very simple story. It was a product of circumstance. The General Conference of 1924 passed legislation making the whole Church, jointly with the Board of Bishops, a committee of review in the matter of the Courses of Study. The law requires that the Commission on Courses of Study shall provide lists of textbooks, selecting only such books as are in full and hearty accord with the established doctrinal standards of the Methodist Church, that it shall submit these lists to the Board of Bishops for approval, and that it shall at the same time report them to any member of the Methodist Church who shall signify his desire to the Secretary of the Commission.

The law thus recognizes the right both of our ministry and of our membership to make a direct examination into this most important interest of our Church. Because of it a committee of twenty was organized to read the texts when they should be selected, prepare a joint finding, and report the same to the Bishops. This committee covered the entire Church, being made up of leading ministers from fifteen Annual Conferences. One layman, who had been close to the discussions in the General Conference of 1924, also served. Each book (where there was any question as to its doctrinal bearing) was reviewed by two or three members of the committee, and these reviews were either sent in writing or reported in person. The texts were all present when the report was draughted, and the citations were examined in each instance. The findings of the committee were in every case unanimous.

The report of the committee of twenty objected to six texts as follows: Rall's Modern Premillennialism, and His New Testament History, Walker's History of the Christian Church, Hayes' Introduction to Sociology, Clarke's Outline of Theology, and Bowne's Studies in Christianity. The committee appeared in person before the Bishops and expressed its objections. Afterward the Bishops made careful examination, with the result that Hayes' Introduction to Sociology was rejected by a decisive vote, and that the other five texts were approved. But the vote in the Board of Bishops was definitely divided. In three instances



approval was by a narrow margin the vote being eight and nine against, to twelve and thirteen in favor.

When these facts came out the committee of twenty were again called together first in Baltimore, and later in Wilmington. At the Baltimore meeting a temporary organization was effected with three committees, one each on Organization, Objectives and Membership. These committees reported at the second meeting called in Wilmington, Delaware, where the permanent organization was effected.

The Committee on Objectives was led by Dr. Clarence True Wilson. Working with him were Dr. Don S. Colt, Dr. Robert H. Crawford and Dr. Robert C. Wells. Their report was adopted by a unanimous vote at the Wilmington meeting. It is printed separately and enclosed.

The Committee on Organization was composed of the officers of temporary organization with the addition of Dr. George H. Nea Atlantic City. They draughted a plan which the Wilmington meeting adopted, also, unanimously. This document appears in full on pages 14 and 15 of this issue.

The roster of officers as provided at Wilmington is as follows:

*President*.....REV. HAROLD PAUL SLOAN, Haddonfield, N. J.  
*Vice-President*.....REV. CLARENCE TRUE WILSON, Washington, D. C.  
*Vice-President*.....CLARENCE D. ANTRIM, Philadelphia, Pa.  
*Vice-President*.....HENRY S. DULANEY, Baltimore, Md.  
*Vice-President*.....CHARLES L. KINSLEY, Philadelphia, Pa.  
*Secretary*.....REV. RAYMOND W. COOKE, Baltimore, Md.  
*Treasurer*.....CHARLES K. HADDON, Haddonfield, N. J.

The objectives of the League are all definitely avowed. Its program is to enlist influential Methodists everywhere, and to bring to their attention the facts that have caused us alarm. Our movement will be free from all personalities, and from all extreme positions. We have no hostility toward scholarship. We have no interest in indiscriminating criticisms. The doctrinal headlands established in the constitution of our Church, affirmed recently by the unanimous vote of our Board of Bishops, and announced as authoritative by an almost unanimous vote of the General Conference of 1924 are our basis. We contend for no peculiar doctrines, not even for some that may have had peculiar emphasis in Methodism; the common Christianity of the centuries is our treasure, as it is our stake. If we are fundamentalists (and doubtless we are) it is fundamentalists upon a broader basis than the organized movement. If our movement is confined to Methodists, it is only because our specific responsibility is for our own Church. We are a League to preserve the faith and life of common Christianity. We have raised the standard. Numbers of prominent Methodists from all over the country are joining us. May God give us grace to persevere, and to persevere in a spirit worthy of our stake. This is our prayer.



## Books to Steady Faith

By JOHN ALFRED FAULKNER, D.D., LL.D.

THE editor has asked me to say a word or two on recent books which would help the faith of ministers and other earnest students of Christianity. It must be remembered, however, that since 1921 when I published *Modernism and the Christian Faith* I have been so busy with my regular Church history work that I have not had time to keep up with books not in my own field. On books that I am not familiar with I have asked the opinion of my colleague, Dr. Lewis, who though occupying a different point of view can give and has given an impartial statement of the kind of teachings a book contains.

Every minister should read, learn and inwardly digest Prof. Machen's *Origin of Paul's Religion* (Macmillan). It is one of the great books. As to a new Conybeare and Howson for Paul—David Smith, *Life and Epistles of St. Paul* (Doran) can be mentioned, and a new Geikie for Christ is Bishop Headlam, *Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ* (Oxford University Press). A splendid book is Rostron, *The Christology of St. Paul* (Revell), and equally for the Old Testament is Prof. Zerbe, *Antiquity of Hebrew Writing and Literature, or Problems in Pentateuchal Criticism* (Central Publishing House, Cleveland), a book of learning and covering a larger territory than the title indicates.

The following books are by masters, and on the recommendation of Prof. Lewis are mentioned as conservative and yet not reactionary: Prof. H. R. Macintosh, *Some Aspects of Christian Belief* (Doran); the Rev. Henry Howard, *The Church which is His Body* (Epworth Press); Prof. W. T. Davison, *The Indwelling Spirit* (Epworth Press); MacColl, *Cardinals of Faith* (sermons), and the two volumes of Prof. Tillett, *Paths that Lead to God* (Doran). These are all able books which tend to build faith, but they are not for children but for men, men who do not keep their faith at the mercy of the latest book or the newest fashion in theology, but know in Whom they believe and why.

Before I close could I be allowed to speak of an interesting venture of Bishop Du Bose, seconded by the Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tenn. (25 cents each), in the publication of a series of books in paper in defense of the Bible, its writing and its doctrines. The idea was to get fresh, brief yet comprehensive and adequate discussions by competent scholars. Some of these were by foreign professors (translated by the editor and others), and at the cost of a cigar or two put the riches of learning on the burning questions of the book at the disposal of all thoughtful people. Here is a list of the first series (The Aftermath Series): 1. Du Bose, *Crisis of Criticism*. 2. Kegel, *History of Israelitish Priesthood*. 3. Kegel, *Religious Reformation of Ezra*. 4. Wilson, *Is the Higher Criticism Scholarly?* 5. Wiener, *Integrity of the Old Testament*. 6. Sellin, *Archaeology vs. Wellhausenism*. 7. Kegel, *Away from Wellhausen*.



8. Loehr, Five Books of Moses and Their Origin. 9. Du Bose, Law and Prophets. 10. Faulkner, Miraculous Birth of Our Lord. 11. Du Bose, Atonement of Christ. 12. Du Bose, Resurrection of Christ.

MADISON, N. J.

### Roster of the Methodist League for Faith and Life

THE officers of the Methodist League for Faith and Life include a president, four vice-presidents, a secretary and a treasurer. Its personnel follows:

President, *Rev. Harold Paul Sloan*, Pastor in Haddonfield, N. J., member of the General Conferences of 1920 and 1924. Member of the Ecumenical Conference at London in 1921.

First Vice-President and Chairman of Committee on Objectives, *Rev. Clarence True Wilson*, Secretary of the Board of Temperance Prohibition and Public Morals. Member of the General Conferences of 1916 and 1924 and of the Ecumenical Conference at London. Member of the Continuation Committee to plan the Ecumenical Conference of 1931.

Second Vice-President and Chairman of Committee on Membership, *Mr. Clarence D. Antrim*. A layman active in all Methodist interests in and about Philadelphia. Member of the Board of Home Missions, President of Methodist Social Union of Philadelphia. Member of the General Conference of 1924, and President of the Philadelphia Missionary and Church Extension Society.

Third Vice-President and Chairman of Committee on Finance, *Mr. Henry S. Dulaney*. An active layman of Baltimore. Until recently President of the Goucher Board of Trustees, and member also of the Board of Foreign Missions.

Fourth Vice-President and Chairman of Committee on Publicity, *Mr. Charles L. Kinsley*. Trustee of the Cooper Memorial Church and Superintendent of the Sunday-school. Member of the Executive Committee of the Laymen's Association, the Philadelphia Sunday-school Association, and one of the Committee on Lay Electoral Conference.

Secretary, *Rev. Raymond W. Cooke*. Member of the Baltimore Conference. Pastor of the South Baltimore Station Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore, Md.

Treasurer, *Mr. Charles K. Haddon*. Trustee of Philadelphia Hospital. Until recently member of the Board of Temperance Prohibition and Public Morals. Chairman of the Pulpit Committee of the Haddonfield Church.

In addition to the officers there are numbers of Methodists with General Conference records serving on the several standing committees.



## “Positive Preaching for a City of Doubt”

By REV. THOMAS S. BROCK, S.T.D.

THE writer is a city preacher. He came to his present appointment after a pastorate of eight years in a town church. He is now on the third year of his present pastorate.

His church has over a thousand members and every walk of life is represented in his constituency. One of the popular features of his Sunday evening service is a Question Box. Nearly every kind of a question finds its way to the pastor because no signature is required to the question. The questions asked and the reaction from the answers indicate clearly that the general public has many doubts and it is looking for a positive, definite message from the pulpit.

That the city is a place of doubt is very evident from the many perplexing questions that find their way to the Question Box. The interview work of the city pastor confirms this statement. If the pastor could reveal some of the perplexities which are stated to him by young people and people perplexed by life's experiences, it would not only reveal the fact that a city pastorate is a great laboratory of spiritual experiments but also that the need of the world is a clear statement of fact rather than theories about life and God.

The city pulpit is not a classroom for the discussion of the theories of inspiration, atonement and resurrection, but a place where the great facts of God's revelation are made known. The ordinary listener is not concerned about the three theories of the atonement, but he is vitally interested in knowing how sins may be overcome.

The preaching which is positive will always command a hearing even in a city which is considered the hardest place in the church.

More people celebrated Christmas and Easter this past year than ever before in the history of the world. Christmas carries the most welcomed news ever given. Christ did not come as a psychologist, nor a reformer, nor a statesman, nor a Caesar, nor a mere man. He came as a Saviour and the need of a Saviour is as great today as ever. The reason so many people celebrated Christmas was because the Son of God became the Son of Man in order that the Sons of Men might become the Sons of God, and when that fact is woven into the experience of the church, we shall understand why it sings Hallelujah!

The world war gave a new meaning to the resurrection of Jesus and people who had only the theory of immortality came to believe that Christ brought immortality to light and because “He lives we shall live also.” Every great emergency in the lives of individuals or nations brings to light the knowledge that in the great crises the people repudiate the doubts and turn to the facts for consolation and guidance.

This evidence should vitally affect every preacher in the land and especially the city pastor, “where cross the crowded way of life.”



Many things go to make up a service in a city church. Music, friendliness, physical comfort and location of the church building all have their influence on the church attendance, but the real test of attendance is the message of the preacher. Some preachers will have a large audience regardless of all these other environments and indicates clearly that the psychology of the situation is the same as was stated by a sales manager when he said, "It is not the territory, but the man that counts." So in the church it is the preacher and his message that counts.

Go to any large city today and seek out the churches where the people go in large numbers and you will find that the liberal churches are poorly attended while the churches which hold to the great facts of God are largely attended.

Mr. Fred B. Smith, that great Christian layman who has travelled and spoken in every section of our country, gives the following confirmatory statement of this truth in his book, "A Man's Religion." He says, "On a beautiful Sunday evening in a Middle Western city, I had a desire to attend a church service. Knowing personally two of the pastors in the town, I debated with myself as to which one I would hear.

"They were well known as representing exactly opposite types of theology. One was 'liberal' to the extreme, the other was regarded by some as narrow and old-fashioned. My desire to get something of a view of these two men, preaching to exactly the same kind of people, in the same town, upon the same evening, led me to decide to attempt to visit both of the churches during the hour of service.

"My first stop was made where the preacher of liberal doctrine was in the pulpit. It chanced to be the Sunday nearest to Lincoln's birthday. The theme of the address was 'Lincoln.' The auditorium of the church would hold twelve hundred people. There were possibly a hundred and fifty in the congregation. There was a vested choir of sixty, and other attractive features.

"The preacher expressed his enthusiastic thanksgiving that he was in a church where 'the door was high enough and wide enough to admit Lincoln.' He argued for 'liberality' in teaching and in conduct. The address was a splendid advertisement for an easy-going, indulgent life.

"After listening to him for some time I quietly slipped out, walking two blocks to the other church, where the pastor of almost an opposite theological complexion was preaching. When I tried to enter by the door at the main entrance, an usher told me that the only possibility of getting in was by going to one of the side doors. I followed his instructions and found myself with many others, standing in the doorway, with no seat available. The second church building was just about the same size as the first which I had visited. The clientele was similar. As I listened to the preacher, he was uttering a truth



which had written all over it, 'Woe unto the man who ignores his call.' There was a grip in every word of it.

"There was authority in the tone of his voice, but no dogmatic ranting. It was an earnest, powerful appeal from the heart of a man who believed absolutely in the truth of his message, and who left no room for any hearer to persuade himself that decision upon the question at issue was unimportant. The people were there to hear him. I am familiar with that city. I recognized in the congregation the president of a college, the State Superintendent of Education, besides others of culture and refinement; and with them, people of every walk of life.

"The first is emptying his church with increasing regularity every year, the other is filling his with equal regularity. There is no perceptible difference in church equipment, in the kind of people, or in location. There is a difference as vast as the east from the west in teaching. One is full of doubt, the other is based upon eternal certainties.

"I am willing that any fair-minded reader shall start from the rock-ribbed coast of Maine and travel to the Golden Gate, or from Winnipeg to the Gulf of Mexico, and make a study as to which one of these two kinds of teaching is commanding attention, and I have no fear but that he will declare that the teaching which is proclaimed with authority is the one men want to hear."

Methodism was born in a university. It has laid great emphasis upon the intellectual life and has produced some of the world's great scholars. She has established more schools and colleges than any other church. Our theological seminaries are crowded to the doors and we have more candidates for the ministry than ever before in our history, and there are fewer vacant pulpits with us than with any other church.

But with all our intellectualism it is producing a gospel of fact rather than a gospel of doubt. The fact of God, the fact of sin, the fact of Christ as a Saviour, the fact of the atonement, the fact of immortality brought to light by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, these and many other great fundamental truths from the Holy Bible are so interwoven in the life of our people and the church called Methodism, that we believe that there will ever remain in every age a group of people who will proclaim these great facts to the joy and conversion of an enlarged constituency, until the whole world will know that Jesus is the Christ, the only Saviour.

The Official Board and Epworth League of a great Middle West Church writes: "The Methodist Episcopal Church, by unanimous vote, put themselves on record as heartily endorsing the Methodist League for Faith and Life organized in St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, Wilmington, Delaware, February 3, 1925, and promise co-operation in any way that may advance the cause."



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# *The Call to the Colors*

## *Organ of the Methodist League for Faith and Life*

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*Editor, HAROLD PAUL SLOAN*

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### **The Stake in the Present Contest**

THE Christian Church is rapidly moving into a period of searching intellectual conflict. We shrink from it as great hearts seem instinctively always to shrink from conflict. We fear its consequences upon Christian life. But, judged by history, conflict is not an unmixed evil. The Reformation was certainly a tremendous conflict, and yet it was also a mighty religious revival. The rise of Methodism has always been thought of as a revival, but it was also in a very real sense a controversy. The awakening led by Charles G. Finney had a very definite controversial side. The fact is, no matter how we may fear it, controversy does not seem of necessity to be injurious to religion. What is fatal to religion is the least touch of insincerity. The men who say things they do not believe for the sake of peace, or who allow others to deny faith for the same reason; these are the men who imperil religion.

But, whether we want it so or not, we are moving into a period of religious controversy; and the stake is the very central reality of Christianity. This fact may not be clear to many, for up to the present there has been a marked lack of candor upon the part of those who have had the leadership of the divergent movement. They have seen fit to distort and explain away what in their own minds they have really intended to deny. For example, they have distorted the Christian faith, that Jesus took again his body on the third day, into the meagre idea, that he survived the experience of death and in some way made his followers certain of this fact. Or they have explained away the glorious miracle of the Virgin Birth into the purely spiritual idea of sinlessness. We trust that this unethical lack of candor will be speedily given up by the Modernist leaders.

But the contest is on, and the stake is not the Verbal Inspiration of the Scriptures, or some extreme notion with respect to the Second Coming of Jesus, or some particular theory of the Atonement, or some particular psychology of Depravity. Instead it is the very center of what has been known through the centuries as Christianity.

Christianity has always seen God as transcendent as well as immanent, and has stressed his transcendent relations with men. Modernism minimizes these transcendent relations. Or to put it in easier language, Christianity



sees God coming to men in supernatural redemptive grace. It sees Him inspiring the prophets to speak an increasing redemptive message. It sees Him crowning this increasing self-revelation in the Incarnation. The Holy Spirit overshadows the Virgin. God comes to men. God is made flesh. The movement is of God manward; it is supernatural; it is personal; it is transcendent. Modernism on the contrary seeks to avoid the supernatural. God is not seen bringing to men an increasing redemptive revelation, but man is seen reaching toward God with increasing success. The crown is not the Incarnation, God made flesh, but rather man evolved to the supreme degree. The movement is of man Godward. God is in it only by his immanence in all force and law; it is naturalistic; it is impersonal. Once again—in Christianity we have the truth. Certainly it is an increasing truth, but it is, nevertheless, truth in every stage of its increase. It is God's enlarging redemptive self-revelation. It is consummated in Christ, God in flesh; Christ, the way, the truth, the life. But in Modernism we do not have the truth at all. We have only man's out-reaching toward the truth. And its crown is not God in flesh, but instead an errant figure; Christ, as a man of his day; Christ, as one confused by the ideas and misconceptions current about him; Christ, who, though he rose higher than any other ever rose, was, nevertheless, one who groped his way, made mistakes, and needs correction by our better light.

This is the stake, and the informed Modernist knows that it is. His talk about Premillennialism, Verbal Inspiration, theological hair-splitting and the rest is all camouflage. The stake in the Church today is whether the final interpretation of the universe shall be naturalistic or supernaturalistic, whether it shall be impersonal or personal, whether Christianity shall be reshaped into an indefinite system of ethical and emotional values with Jesus standing simply as their highest illustration and exemplar, or whether it shall remain a sublime body of definite facts and abiding truths crowned in a real Incarnation.

### **The Balance between Order and Liberty in Protestantism**

**I**T IS a truth so patent that it needs only to be stated, that Christianity is different from Buddhism or Mohammedanism. This being true, it therefore has and must always have authoritative standards. It is a truth not equally patent, but nevertheless equally sure, that the authoritative standards of Christianity cannot safely be in such fulness of detail that they exclude freedom of thought and individual initiative. To put it in a word, we must have standards sufficient to keep us Christian in our emphasis, and freedom sufficient to keep us vital.

Whether the Christian Church in any of its branches has discovered this perfect balance between order and liberty may be a question. What the Church has done is not a question, it is a fact of history.

The Modernists are constantly claiming that Protestantism gives to men an almost unlimited freedom, that nothing is fixed and authoritative, that they are free to deny or explain away the Virgin Birth, or the Bodily Resur-



rection, and indeed, the very integrity of the Incarnation itself. This Modernist claim is a pure subjectivity. It has no foundation in history. It is like the spider's web, something spun out of their own minds. History shows that Protestantism has never been such a nebulous affair, an organization in which every man is privileged to think and teach as he pleases. On the contrary Protestantism has always been a part of the common Christian stream, taking its rise in the common Christian facts and doctrines. Thus the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Shorter Catechism have been for centuries authoritative in the Lutheran Church. The Westminster Confession has been authoritative in the Presbyterian Church. The Thirty-nine Articles have been authoritative in the Anglican Church. The Twenty-five Articles and Wesley's Standard Sermons and Notes on the New Testament have been authoritative in the Methodist Church.

The Protestant standards are doubtless not as detailed as the Roman Catholic. In Methodism, in particular, the standards do not fix the details of belief; but they do fix the great headlands of faith. Nor is there any question as to what these great headlands are. They are the whole of common Christianity. They are the whole truth of the common Christian creeds. The Bible as the only and sufficient rule of Faith and Practice; the Unity and Trinity of God; the Incarnation of the Son, His Virgin Birth, His Redemptive and Propitiatory Sacrifice, His Resurrection, Ascension, and Second Coming at the end of the world to judge the quick and the dead; the Personal Holy Spirit; the Fall and Depravity; Justification by Faith; Regeneration; the Judgment, and the everlastings of beatification and retribution that lie beyond it.

These truths are all established and authoritative in Protestantism. And in its organized life Protestantism never has, and does not now have any intention either of omitting or of repudiating any of them. Individual Protestants may do either or both, but this circumstance is no more a repudiation of the Protestant standards than the violations of the Volstead Act is a repudiation of American law. The fact of the matter is, the analogy between Modernists and liquor violators is in some respects closer than the former would care to admit. Both groups justify their individualism by the same glorification of personal freedom, both have the same sense of invaded rights, and both are guilty of the same daring lawlessness. There is nothing more high-handed or defiant of law than the Modernist attitude which in Christian pulpit and college chair flouts the creed it has vowed to teach, and while it recites the formulae of faith, denies or explains away nearly every item of them.

But not to press this analogy we would call attention to an interesting circumstance. It is, of course, admitted that the Modernist current is largely due to the influence of certain German scholars. In view of this fact it is interesting to observe that the Lutheran Church of Germany at their World Convention in Eisenach, Germany, August 19, 1923, adopted the following:



"The Lutheran World Convention acknowledges the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the only source and the infallible norm (standard, test) of all Church teaching and practice; and it sees in the Lutheran Confessions, especially in the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Smaller Catechism, a pure exposition of the word of God."

The Presbyterians, the Episcopalians, the Southern Baptists and the Methodists south and north have all taken a similar position recently. In view of these things it is worse than idle for the Modernists to go on talking of a Protestant liberty, which they know does not exist. Modernism is not Protestantism. Modernism is not an evolved Protestantism. Modernism is a philosophical and moral confusion that is only saved from being positively unethical by being painfully muddled. This is the best that can be said of it. Protestantism is a part of the Common stream of Christian faith, with established standards that are binding upon all those who have chosen to accept the trust of its teaching or preaching ministry.

## Growth of the League

By CHARLES K. HADDON

SINCE the first meeting at Baltimore, Md., on the 16th of December, 1925, when some ministers from four or five conferences gathered, with a few laymen, interest has so increased in the purpose to stand firmly for the Word of God in its entirety and not to allow it to be explained away, that now the four or five conferences have been increased to more than thirty in the short space of a dozen weeks. The cards for membership in the Methodist League for Faith and Life are not always marked with the conference designation of the applicant so the following list of conferences is not complete but it surely indicates a country wide intention to maintain the faith:

Baltimore, Detroit, Genesee, Holstein, Nebraska, North Dakota, New Jersey, N. E. Ohio, N. Indiana, Michigan, Oklahoma, Oregon, Newark, Philadelphia, Puget Sound, Indiana, Troy, Rock River, Southern California, Southern Illinois, West Ohio, Wilmington, Wyoming, Alabama, Wisconsin, N. W. Iowa, Upper Iowa, New York East, Iowa, Tennessee.

It is interesting to note the daily activities and occupations of some of the members of the Methodist League for Faith and Life. They include men and women prominent in Church, social and national life, ministers of our largest and smallest churches, presidents of boards of trustees, Sunday-school superintendents and teachers, church officers, students in college, business men, corporation lawyers, college professors, manufacturers, men and women employed in stores and factories, college presidents, judges of our courts, all intensely interested in this work. Won't you help also?



The Treasurer is taking advantage of the opportunity afforded by the first issue of *THE CALL TO THE COLORS* to acknowledge the receipt of contributions had from those who have not previously had such recognition and trusts that each one will personally hereby accept the thanks of the Methodist League for Faith and Life for their interest and support.

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The League is concerned neither with Premillennialism, with Verbal Inspiration, nor with any other personal opinions. These ideas are not included in the great common confessions. They have never been a part of the confessional basis of Christianity. They are theories in the sphere of private opinion.

The League is built squarely upon those great truths that are confessed in the common Christian creeds and that are the property of all Christians of all denominations and every century.



## Faulkner's "The Miraculous Birth of Our Lord"

By REV. GEORGE H. NEAL, D.D.

THIS recent booklet by Professor Faulkner is one of a number issued by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. These booklets are being pushed by several of the Bishops of that Church. They are edited by one of the most valiant of them, Bishop Horace M. Du Bose. The purpose of these publications is to defend Historic Christianity in the present crisis. Dr. Faulkner's booklet is a strong and convincing defense of the Virgin Birth of our Lord. Throughout his discussion the author uses the words "The Birth" to mean the supernatural or Virgin Birth of Jesus, and to save space, the reviewer will do the same. Dr. Faulkner writes: "With the exception of a portion of the Ebionites in the second century, speaking generally, the universal belief of the Christian Church from the beginning to modern times was that our Lord Jesus Christ was born miraculously, that is, by the Holy Spirit without the aid of the father." However, now and then through the centuries little groups of doubters of the Birth have appeared; mere eddies in a great river sweeping toward the sea. The influence of the German Philosopher Kant, in his rejection of the supernatural, is the cause of the present day indifference to, or outspoken denial of, this doctrine of the Birth.

The Gospels of both Luke and Matthew are early in origin and absolutely trustworthy witnesses to the supernatural Birth of our Lord's humanity. In all the manuscripts of Luke there is only one variation from the statement of the Birth, as we have it in our version, "but a reading which has all the manuscripts except one, is practically unanimous." Of the four hundred "original manuscripts of Matthew's Gospel, all the early versions give the ordinary reading" except two.

Professor Faulkner has this to say as to John's position: "He (John) presupposes a knowledge of the three Gospels, and therefore does not repeat their accounts. For this reason, and probably for this reason alone, he does not mention the Birth. But he takes it for granted, and his whole thought moves in a circle wherein a non-miraculous birth is impossible." The silence of Mark about the Birth is easily explained. "He wrote for Romans, who were men of deeds, and wanted a short account of Christ's life as a doer."

But is the plain and direct testimony of two witnesses to be cast away because two others do not testify? Such a procedure would overthrow all the courts in the world. Paul like John assumes the Birth, but his purpose in writing his epistles did not require him to dwell upon the Birth. Withdraw the Birth, and his doctrine of the person of Christ suffers irreparable damage.

The Apostles Creed (about 100 A. D.) has in its earliest forms the begetting by the "Spirit and the Virgin Mary" of the humanity of Christ. All the outstanding second century Fathers of the Church definitely testify to the supernatural Birth. The Deniers of the Birth, in all the centuries, have been Jews, Pagans and Philosophers.



Critics, in explaining the origin of the Birth idea, go to pagan stories of divine births. Of such Dr. Faulkner writes:

"It is credulity gone mad. Notice: (1) The Greek myths have no historical basis, connection, atmosphere. The New Testament Birth is in a setting of details of time, place, relations, etc. (2) The former have no worthy religious bearing; the latter is a part of a divine history of salvation. (3) The former are accounts of actual sexual relations of lustful gods transformed into men (or more ignoble transformations) for the purpose. The heathen writers of the second and third centuries made the same use of these myths to discredit the Birth, but Origen was so impressed with its horrible unfairness that he thought such use an evidence of buffoonery, not of serious thinking."

Dr. Fosdick uses these pagan stories of divine births to discredit the Virgin Birth of Jesus. In view of the facts set forth in Professor Faulkner's third item, above, how are he and the other modern users of Paganism's shallow and exploded arguments to be classified?

But someone will ask is this doctrine of the Birth fundamental? We answer, it is, and must be held. In the first place, if the Gospels are untrustworthy on the Birth, who can trust them on other crucial matters? In the second place, without the Birth, you have only a Godfilled man akin to other Christians, not an incarnation of God. Such a human figure cannot be the foundation stone of the Christian faith. The death of incarnate God is the only sufficient atonement for the world's sin, "A damaged Christ never can save a damaged world." To reject the Birth, is the beginning of the rejection of all the supernatural in Christianity, and Christianity minus the supernatural is only ethical theism, or Unitarianism, or Judiasm. By subtracting the Birth, James Martineau finally landed in Unitarianism, his sister in atheism, and the Modernists are going swiftly on in the last part of the last stretch of Martineau's journey.

Will Methodism allow such a subtraction of the Supernatural, such a journeying toward Unitarianism, to go on within its fellowship? We answer, NEVER! God be praised for Dr. Faulkner's latest expression and for these other fearless Knights of Methodism to the south of us. The rosy blush of a new day of faith is low in the east. We wait for the full glow of the morning.

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## Constitution of the Methodist League for Faith and Life

### Article I PURPOSE

The Christian Church in all ages has stood for the promotion of life, in relation to Jesus Christ, and through him in relation to all men. This relationship has been built upon faith, understood at once as an intellectual acceptance of a body of truth, and as an attitude of self-trusting toward Christ.

In recent years a negative opinion has developed toward many of the truths most precious to Christian faith, and this opinion has worked a serious decline in the standards of Christian living.

These conditions call for a clear note of warning, and for a corrective emphasis and activity. It is to meet these conditions and to answer this call that we are undertaking to launch a new movement and organization in Methodism.



## Article II

## NAME

The name of this organization shall be Methodist League for Faith and Life.

## Article III

## OFFICERS

There shall be seven general officers elected at the annual meeting of the League. These officers shall be a President, four Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The duties of the President shall be to preside at the meetings of the League, to call special meetings, and to perform such other duties as the League may direct. The duties of the Vice-Presidents shall be to exercise the office of President in his absence and to act as Chairmen of the Standing Committees. The duties of the Secretary shall be to keep a faithful record of all the proceedings and activities of the League. The duties of the Treasurer shall be to secure funds, to receive the annual dues of the membership, and to keep an accurate account of all receipts and expenditures.

## Article IV

## MEMBERSHIP

All members of the Methodist Episcopal Church who shall certify their acceptance of the common Christian creeds in their plain meaning as this is set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who will agree by daily prayer, weekly worship, and by a steadfast devotion, to seek to forward a deepened spiritual life in the Church, and who are purposed to aid in defending the Faith against unbelief in this crisis of history shall be eligible for membership in the League.

## Article V

## FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

We recognize the right of private opinion in respect of all matters not included among those few great foundations of faith that are defined in Methodism, and that have always been defined and established in the Christian Church. Concerning these established truths there can be within the Church no private right either to deny them or to explain them away, since to believe them and to witness them is a chief purpose of Christian organization.

## Article VI

## CHRISTIAN METHOD

We call upon ourselves and upon each other diligently to guard the Christian spirit of our undertaking; to be faithful in truth, and yet charitable in judgment; to be frank, open, sincere, and we provide that the objects of this organization must always be definitely fixed and openly announced from the beginning of their promotion.

## Article VII

## MEETINGS

There shall be an annual meeting, at which time the officers shall be elected. This meeting shall be held. . . . . In addition to the annual meeting the President is authorized to call special meetings at such times and places as he may deem advisable; but upon the request of any ten members the President shall call a meeting.

## Article VIII

## COMMITTEES

There shall be an Executive Committee, composed of the officers, which shall have full power to act for the League between meetings. There shall also be four standing committees, one each on Objects, Membership, Finance and Publication.

## Article IX

## LOCAL CHAPTERS

The membership shall be one body, but local chapters may be instituted under the leadership of two local Vice-Presidents to promote prayer, encourage serious evangelical reading, and to forward locally the recognized objectives of the League.

## Article X

## AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any meeting of the League. Provided, however, at least thirty days must intervene between the announcement of a proposed amendment and its final adoption. A proposed amendment shall be printed in the official paper and a written vote by members unable to attend shall be counted. A two-thirds majority of the members voting shall be sufficient to amend, save that Articles IV, VI and X can be amended only by a majority of three-fourths.



## Brevities Concerning the League

The League stands for freedom without the sacrifice of order.

The League holds its mind open to every fact, and is cordial to all scholarship that is true to Faith.

The League values unity; but regards unity of spirit as more precious than unity of body. The peace of the Church which is purchased at the price of its truth and reality is too dearly purchased.

Religion is not injured by controversy, but insincerity is quickly fatal to it.

The realities of religion are invisible, and are held by faith alone. When faith and its witness are corrupted by insincerity, religion has lost all reality, and all meaning.

The leadership and membership of these committees is made up of men loyal to faith, and most of them also men with a service record in the Church.

Jesus said: "I came not to bring peace but a sword." He doubtless meant that an honest division was holier than a shallow peace. Peace is not always the heroes' sacrifice, it is sometimes the cowards' betrayal. Peace with Modernism on the part of these who believe in the Eternal Godhood and the Finished Redemptive Work of Jesus will be increasingly seen to be impossible. It would have been seen long since were it not that the Modernists' positions are stated with such a lack of candor and lucidity.

Naturalism is not science and never will be, it is a philosophical creed. It is as much a creed as supernaturalism. If one believes in the personal he must believe in the supernatural. If he believes in the supernatural nothing is gained by paring it down by the denial of individual miracles. The question here is three-fold: First, what is your presupposition, naturalistic or supernaturalistic? Second, is the particular miracle historically attested? Third, is the particular miracle morally worthy? Upon such a basis belief in miracles is just as intellectual (to say no more) as disbelief in them.

An outstanding Methodist educator and scholar writes: "This is the divinest fight since Athanasius' weary spirit went up into ineffable light fifteen hundred and fifty years ago."

A Modernist criticized a painting of the Ascension unveiled recently in an eastern Church. He said, "It does not seem fair to hang such a painting in a Methodist Church for a Modernist might be appointed to the Church and the painting would be an embarrassment to him. We do not believe in any of those ideas."

The League paper will be published monthly. Articles and news items should be sent to 1709 Arch Street, addressed to the Methodist League for Faith and Life, or to the editor-in-chief, Haddonfield, N. J.

**As a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, heartily confessing the common Christian Creeds (understood in their plain meaning as outlined in the Articles of Religion of my Church), and endorsing the avowed purposes of the *Methodist League for Faith and Life* I desire membership in its body.**

Name.....

Official Relation.....  
(Preacher, Sunday-school Teacher, Steward, Trustee—State which)

Address.....

Date..... Amount.....

The minimum membership fee is \$1.00, which includes a year's subscription to the League Paper.

A contributing membership has been provided for in the payment of \$10, \$25, \$50 and \$100, based upon the amount you desire to invest in this cause.

Make checks payable to CHARLES K. HADDON, Treasurer

Address all communications to **METHODIST LEAGUE FOR FAITH AND LIFE**  
1709 Arch Street, Room 212, Philadelphia, Pa.

Sign and return to above address.